

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

LUFKIN DIVISION

MASON JAMES	§	
VS.	§	CIVIL ACTION NO. 9:17cv124
DIRECTOR, TDCJ-CID	§	

ORDER OVERRULING OBJECTIONS AND ADOPTING
THE MAGISTRATE JUDGE'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Petitioner Mason James, an inmate confined in the Eastham Unit, proceeding *pro se*, brought this petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254.

The court referred this matter to the Honorable Zack Hawthorn, United States Magistrate Judge, at Beaumont, Texas, for consideration pursuant to applicable laws and orders of this court. The Magistrate Judge recommends the petition be dismissed.

The court has received and considered the Report and Recommendation of United States Magistrate Judge filed pursuant to such order, along with the record and pleadings. Petitioner filed objections to the Report and Recommendation.¹ This requires a *de novo* review of the objections in relation to the pleadings and the applicable law. *See* FED. R. CIV. P. 72(b).

After careful consideration, the court concludes petitioner's objections should be overruled. While the reduction in time-earning capacity reduced the amount of good conduct time petitioner is eligible to earn each month, it did not cause petitioner to forfeit any previously earned good conduct time. Under these circumstances, due process concerns are not implicated and prison officials were not required to afford petitioner due process at the disciplinary hearing. *See Luken*,

¹ Petitioner filed a Motion for Relief from Judgment which has been construed as objections to the report since a judgment has not yet been entered.

71 F.3d at 193. The punishment imposed in this case did not affect the fact or duration of confinement. Accordingly, petitioner's claims do not present grounds warranting relief pursuant to federal habeas corpus review.

Furthermore, petitioner is not entitled to the issuance of a certificate of appealability. An appeal from a judgment denying federal habeas corpus relief may not proceed unless a judge issues a certificate of appealability. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2253; FED. R. APP. P. 22(b). The standard for granting a certificate of appealability, like that for granting a certificate of probable cause to appeal under prior law, requires the movant to make a substantial showing of the denial of a federal constitutional right. *See Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 483-84 (2000); *Elizalde v. Dretke*, 362 F.3d 323, 328 (5th Cir. 2004); *see also Barefoot v. Estelle*, 463 U.S. 880, 893 (1982). In making that substantial showing, the movant need not establish that he should prevail on the merits. Rather, he must demonstrate that the issues are subject to debate among jurists of reason, that a court could resolve the issues in a different manner, or that the questions presented are worthy of encouragement to proceed further. *See Slack*, 529 U.S. at 483-84. Any doubt regarding whether to grant a certificate of appealability is resolved in favor of the movant, and the severity of the penalty may be considered in making this determination. *See Miller v. Johnson*, 200 F.3d 274, 280-81 (5th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 531 U.S. 849 (2000).

Here, petitioner has not shown that any of the issues raised by his claims are subject to debate among jurists of reason. The factual and legal questions advanced by the movant are not novel and have been consistently resolved adversely to his position. In addition, the questions presented are not worthy of encouragement to proceed further. Therefore, petitioner has failed to make a sufficient

showing to merit the issuance of a certificate of appealability. Accordingly, a certificate of appealability shall not be issued.

ORDER

Accordingly, petitioner's objections are **OVERRULED**. The findings of fact and conclusions of law of the Magistrate Judge are correct and the report of the Magistrate Judge is **ADOPTED**. A final judgment will be entered in this case in accordance with the Magistrate Judge's recommendations.

So Ordered and Signed

Nov 4, 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Clark", is written above a horizontal line.

Ron Clark, United States District Judge